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Q. Will there be exercise equipment in the double gym for the public to use?

A. Due to space considerations there will not be exercise equipment.

Q. Will there be a walking track at the double gym?

A. There will not be a separate walking track, but the gym is designed that when basketball is not being played on the court there will be a path for walking around the inside of the entire facility.

Q. What are the courts next to the Double Gym for?

A. These courts are for Pickleball and there will be

eight courts in total. The area already has the asphalt surface applied and the required fencing is being installed. Once this is all complete the final lined surface will be applied by a specialty contractor. These courts may be available prior to years end, but the restrooms and a small pavilion will not be complete until late spring or early summer. The Union County Pickleball Club has been instrumental in advising the county on how these courts should be constructed and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work, research, and input.

Cummings... continued from Page 4A

have nothing to do with him. But, time has a way of healing many sore spots. As the years went by John became more and more feeble. He made things right with my great-grandfather. Lon was always close to his father even though he couldn't understand why his Dad had left his mother. So, one Christmas he invited John to come home and spend some time with his family.

The whole family was invited for Christmas dinner. Some came and some refused. There was still much bitterness among some of the boys. Lon's oldest daughter, Mabel (Papa's sister), had an idea. She bought her Papa a brand new pair of overalls. She asked everyone to bring a gift for the old man. Mabel gathered all the gifts and stuffed them into

the overalls. Next she sewed the leg openings together so the gifts would not fall out. John was so old he had trouble seeing, but, he knew the overalls were new so he tried to put them on. But, he could not get his leg into them. So, he turned them upside down and reached his arm into the legs and began pulling out his gifts. Old John soon had about 10 gifts lying at his feet. Papa said he had tears running down his face and he was laughing at the same time.

The old man got more than he bargained for that Christmas. He received the gifts and received the forgiveness of his family. I think that is why Papa loves Christmas. He was able to experience firsthand the true meaning of Christmas.

Chamber... continued from Page 4A

all the wonderful Christmas decorations (and maybe stop by our downtown merchants and check some items off your Christmas shopping lists!).

The New Year is almost here which means we will soon be hosting our Chamber Awards Night on January 23. This annual awards presentation and dinner will honor standout leaders from the Blairsville-Union County area and recognize individuals and businesses that represent local economic drivers including hospitality, manufacturing and small business. Individual tickets are \$40 and table and event sponsorships are available. Call 706-745-5789 for more information.

Join us for our first

Monthly Mingle of 2020. You won't want to miss this one. Susan Stalcup, with North Georgia Extreme Boot Camp will be here to talk about fitness goals to start off your New Year! Expect motivating fitness advice and exercise demonstrations during this lunch! Register online or call the Chamber to learn more.

Be sure to check out our events calendar online at visitblairsvillega.com to learn more about additional Christmas activities taking place this month. And please don't forget to support our local merchants that are here to support us year-round as you knock out all of your Christmas shopping over the next couple of weeks.

Drug Free... continued from Page 4A

increase in IQ with prolonged use. Teens who use marijuana are more likely to experience school failure, which can lead to school dropout. When addicted to marijuana, adolescents often lack motivation and energy, and lose interest in activities they used to enjoy.

Parents should know that marijuana is addictive, illegal and can get in the way of children reaching their full potential. It is important for every parent to know the facts about marijuana and effectively communicate the risk to their children.

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Minimizing impermeable surfaces such as the driveway or walkway on your property will also reduce erosion. Obviously, you will need some impermeable surfaces at your property, such as a roof for your house. For cases like that, it's important to design pathways for the water from those impermeable surfaces to travel so that they can be deposited in a rain garden or pond. Rain

gardens collect water allow the water to infiltrate back into the soil instead of having it run downhill. Usually they have plants that are adapted to living in damp soils.

If you have any questions about erosion or what you can do to prevent erosion at your property please contact your county Extension Office or send me an email at [Jacob.Williams@uga.edu](mailto:Williams@uga.edu).

Magee... continued from Page 4A

judgment because our fellow man may not be of faith or does not share the same faith or because our skin is a different color or because we are of different political and religious affiliations? Are we not ALL children of God after all? At least, that is what the Word of God, aka the Bible, states in John 1:3, Galatians 3:26, and Acts 17:28, to mention a few examples.

So, since we are all children of God, why should the fact that we are different in some ways have any bearing on how we treat one another? Why do some of a particular color, faith or religion think they are superior over others who do not share the same color, faith or religion? Is it not God's job to pass judgment on others instead of ours? He simply asked that we "treat each other as we would have them treat us," as stated in Luke 6:31, Philippians 2:4, John 7:24, Ephesians 4:32, Matthew 7:1-6 and Romans 12:10, to name but a few...

The choice to support and enable the undermining of our morals, integrity, empathy and our democracy is not going to "make America great again," regardless of our political party affiliation, or how many Sundays we sit on a pew in Church, or how Christian we believe ourselves to be. Every time we look the other way or condone, enable, conduct or participate in the egregious behavior of ourselves or others, we are becoming a part of the problem and not a part of the solution. If any of us think otherwise,

then we are indeed in even more serious trouble than was first perceived, and we have become a huge disappointment to whichever version of God you follow. The lives of our children and grandchildren, the health of our planet, the future of our freedoms, and the longevity of our existence all depend on the choices we make in the here and now.

We need to pay attention and make the choice to change this downward-spiral path of immoral behavior, hate, divisiveness and ignorance that we are currently on before it is too late to turn the tide of self-destruction. Our humanitarianism deserves better. WE THE PEOPLE of the United States of America deserve better. ALL of God's children deserve better, and "Our Father" certainly deserves better than what we have demonstrated as his children thus far.

"A different world cannot be built by indifferent people." ~ Peter Marshall
Jo Magee

UC Historical Society's Brick Walk

To show our appreciation for the overwhelming community support for the Union County Historical Society's Brick Walk, we are extending the current price of \$50 per brick. Please call the Historical Society at 706-745-5493 or come by the old courthouse to purchase one in memory or in honor of a loved one.

Riley... continued from Page 4A

mas than before. For example, none of the ten dates with the largest shares of home Christmas tree structure fires were before Christmas.

Electrical failures or malfunctions were involved in one-third (32%) of the home Christmas tree structure fires. One in six (17%) occurred because some type of heat source was too close to the tree. Decorative lights on line voltage were involved in 12% of these incidents. Seven percent of home Christmas tree fires were started by candles. Twenty percent of home Christmas tree structure fires were intentionally set. Half of the intentional Christmas tree fires occurred in the 20 days after Christmas. The risk of fire is higher with natural trees than artificial ones.

Researchers found that dry natural trees burned easily but trees that had been kept moist are unlikely to catch fire unintentionally. Holiday lights and other decorative lighting with line voltage were involved in an estimated average of 150 home structure fires per year in this same period. Fifteen percent of these fires began with Christmas trees. Electrical failures or malfunctions were factors in nearly two-thirds (64%) of the fires involving holiday or decorative lights.

In a study of fall-related injuries during the holiday season, it was estimated that an annual average of roughly 5,800 fall injuries related to holiday decorating were treated at hospital emergency rooms between November 1 and January 31 in 2013-2017. Sixty-two percent of those injured were between 20 and 49 years of age, compared to 43% of the population

Fowler...

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In Christ, you are marginalized no more. He knows, loves, and values you regardless of your past, or your present status. When by faith you exchange your life for His, you become part of God's providential plan. You have your own news to tell of forgiveness and reconciliation. The Christmas story began in the heart of the Father in eternity past, but the peace on earth and good will announced by the angels is for you today!

Gray...

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bors and friends who live in this lovely "small town with a big heart," I extend best wishes for a Merry CHRISTmas and a glad New Year!

It may not still be "Thanksgiving," but I am giving thanks anew for that couple: Mark and Sharon Wingertsahn - new friends with big hearts!
Respectfully submitted,
Arlene M. Gray

Weekly Patriot Reflection



Religion in Civilization

Americans of the 20th and 21st centuries often fail to realize the supreme importance which the Founding Fathers originally attached to the role of religion in the structure of the civilization which they hoped would emerge as the first free people in modern times. We fail to realize that the Founders felt the role of religion would be as important in our day as it was in theirs. In 1787 Congress passed the famous Northwest Ordinance, which among other things emphasized the essential need to teach religion, morality and knowledge.

President G. Washington reemphasized these essentials in his farewell address when he stated "of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. With caution let us indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail to the exclusion of religious principle."

My friends we need to seriously heed these words. To state the obvious, we need moral awakening that acknowledges and proclaims the sovereignty and truth of God's Word.

A Patriot Reflection is presented weekly by www.joshuaswarriors.org.

citizens to use to reduce their risk from a destructive fire. For more information on holi-

day Fires, Firewise, Ready Set Go, or wildfire education go to www.firewise.org